



# SOLID WASTE works

summer/fall 2007

Solid Waste Works is a quarterly employee newsletter published by the Miami-Dade County Department of Solid Waste Management



## EZ Go Goal Accomplished

Out with the old and in with the new. The Miami-Dade Department of Solid Waste Management (DSWM) has set and reached a new goal this year, the complete

conversion to automated garbage collection service.

Working tirelessly, Department employees were able to deliver the last 400 EZ Go Waste Carts to residents bringing the final total to more than 300,000 households. The move to automated service began in 2000 with a pilot program to residents of Southwest Miami-Dade County, and has since been one of the Department's highest priorities.

In January, Miami-Dade County Mayor Carlos Alvarez issued a fitness challenge to the Department to complete the service rollout by August 1. This challenge gave the entire DSWM staff extra incentive to get the job done quickly.

"As expected, the employees of the DSWM took the challenge head on -- and not only succeeded -- but were able to finish before the Mayor's deadline, delivering the final carts on July 24th," said DSWM Director Kathleen Woods-Richardson.

The EZ Go Waste Cart was designed to make trash collection easier, cleaner and safer for employees and residents. Instead of lifting heavy cans

to the curb, residents can roll the EZ Go Waste Cart down the driveway. Employees no longer have to get out of the garbage truck, empty the cans and get back in the truck. Now, the driver stays in the cab of the truck and uses a lifting arm to grab the cart and empty the contents into the truck. The new process saves time and reduces the chance of garbage falling onto the street.

The Department continues to work to improve our services by providing excellent customer service. We are working hard answering residents' requests for additional or smaller EZ Go Waste Carts. Providing options to meet the needs of the residents in the community keeps the DSWM on top as one of the best solid waste departments.

Meeting the Mayor's fitness challenge is something all divisions of DSWM can be proud of. The Department's dedication to the residents of Miami-Dade County is our number one priority and we achieve it by *Delivering Excellence Every Day*.

## DID YOU KNOW?

♻ Litter dumped in the street is washed down the storm drains, which take it to canals, lakes and the ocean.

♻ One plastic bag takes 10 to 20 years to breakdown.

♻ One aluminum can takes 80 to 200 years to breakdown.

♻ You can help protect the environment by throwing your trash in the garbage can.



### MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear DSWM Staff,

I thank you for your commitment and dedication to excellence as the DSWM participated in the Florida Sterling Challenge assessment process. The rigorous process evaluated all areas of our Department and provided an independent assessment of the DSWM's implementation of the County's performance initiatives and alignment of our services with the needs of the community.

This prestigious group, which evaluates public and private corporations throughout Florida, found a number of impressive strengths in our performance.

The council's report recognized the Department for our Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) and our Hurricane Plan. Additional strengths that were reported include our fiscal responsibility, our clear focus on communicating the vision and values of the Department, multiple points of access for customers to obtain information and our generosity and support of the Miami-Dade County community through participation in community events including United Way and Career Day.

One special comment from the council that I am particularly proud of is that the examiners found DSWM employees to be well informed and cooperative. I thank you again for the hard work that went into taking part in this evaluation.

The council has provided us with comments on areas of improvement that I know can be achieved. The suggestions for improvement include adding a systematic process for succession planning, centralizing customer complaints for performance improvement, deploying active strategy enterprise to utilize data which has been completed and set priorities for improvement, and to develop means that measure the effectiveness of training programs.

The Florida Sterling Challenge assessment will be used in conjunction with Miami-Dade County's Active Strategy system as tools to implement enhancements to our Department. All areas of improvement are within our grasp, if we continue to work together as a team to *Deliver Excellence Every Day*. Keep up the good work!

Kathleen Woods-Richardson  
Director

# Don't Trash It. Can It!

The Department of Solid Waste Management (DSWM) has launched a new litter awareness campaign with one simple message to residents "Don't Trash It. Can It!" The campaign, which features radio advertising, print advertising, billboards and even posters at bus shelters, on



buses and on DSWM automated trucks, is the beginning of a quest to get residents to do their part to keep our community clean.

The goal of the campaign is to reduce the amount of litter in Miami-Dade County. Litter hurts the environment, tarnishes our community's image and is against the law. Miami-Dade County is one of the most beautiful and traveled tourist destinations in the world. The anti-litter campaign is designed to preserve our natural beauty.

The DSWM's strategy to stop this behavior doesn't end with the slogan, "Don't Trash It. Can It!" The Department is encouraging residents to

dial 3-1-1 to report littered areas. One small change can lead to drastic results and just by properly disposing of your trash a difference can be made.



# The Path to Performance Excellence

Since 1992 the Florida Sterling Council, a not-for-profit corporation, has visited, evaluated and rewarded corporations throughout Florida for their performance. The organization with the most significant improvement and performance excellence is awarded the Governor's Sterling Award, which is recognized as one of the finest state awards in the nation.

On April 1 through April 6, the DSWM received a visit from a team of eight Examiners from the Florida Sterling Council. Examiners addressed strengths and opportunities for improvement based on an extensive evaluation of the Sterling Criteria for all sectors of the DSWM. These strength and improvement areas were identified from an application package scored based on the following Sterling Criteria: Leadership, Strategic Planning, Customer and Market Focus, Information and Analysis, Human Resource Focus, Process Management and Business Results.

The Florida Sterling Council hosts an annual award conference. At each conference the council invites employees from the sites visited to provide more feedback on improving their facility and to present awards for meeting different criteria.

On May 29 through June 1, two representatives from DSWM, Stacey McDuffie and Deborah Silver, attended the 15th Annual Sterling Conference in Orlando. The conference was an excellent professional development tool that included informational sessions, networking opportunities, a Team Showcase competition and Governor's Banquet. During the awards ceremony the Department received a recognition plaque for being a "Sterling Challenger."

Six organizations received the Governor's



Sterling Award, the state's most prestigious award for performance excellence. A Department qualifies to receive the Governor's Sterling Award after

implementing the Sterling Criteria.

"We understand that this is only the beginning of the long road ahead of us in becoming a recipient of the Governor's Sterling Award," said McDuffie.

# It Takes a Department to Raise a Child

Several children of DSWM employees took the trip to work with their parents for national Take Our Daughters and Sons To Work Day. This experience in the workplace was just a glimpse of what their parents do every day and also an opportunity for the kids to think about what they want to be when they grow up.

During the day, the kids participated in a hurricane learning workshop. They answered questions on preparing for hurricane season like how to locate the safestplace in the home during a storm, and what items are most important on a supply checklist.

The kids got to see firsthand what their parents do for a living and were invited to go downtown and take pictures with Mayor Carlos Alvarez.



Mayor Carlos Alvarez and the children of DSWM employees on Take Our Daughters and Sons To Work Day. The children are: Alexis Johnson, Alex Silver, Kemanee Smith, Timothy Clark, Tyrone Lomax Jr., Jaysey Lazabal, Jamelia Boline, Victoria Rogers, Taylor Love and Carter Rodriguez.



# CONGRATULATIONS

## CORNER

***Twenty-seven DSWM staff members have been rewarded for their hard work on the job with a promotion during the third quarter of the fiscal year. The following is a listing of the employees and their new positions:***

Jamie Graves,  
Asst. Transfer Station Support

Francisco Gomez,  
Landfill Support

Vettikattil Praveen-Kumar,  
System Analyst Programmer 2

**Trash Truck Driver 1**

Lamar Bennett  
Hughes Desir  
Kenyada Hanna  
Antonio Jarrett  
Matthew Swarn, Jr.  
Derek Williams

**Trash Truck Driver 2**

Quincy Brown  
Ray Payne  
Bertha Woods

**Waste Truck Driver**

Charles Ashley  
Ronald Castillo  
Ralph Inman  
Derrick Irby  
Calvin W. Jones  
Kelvin Murray  
Lyonel Pierre  
Clement Temple  
Gerald Williams  
Lindberg Williams, Jr.  
Noah Williams

Kenneth Major,  
Waste Equipment Operator

Jacqueline Willis,  
Waste Radio Operator

**Welcome the following new members to the DSWM team:**

Barbara Casanova-Diaz,  
Accountant 1,  
Accounting Division

Maria Clavijo-Bastian,  
Adm. Secretary,  
Environmental Compliance  
Division

Darrell Cochran,  
Environmental Tech. 2,  
Environmental  
Compliance Division

Kepler Louis,  
Personnel Specialist 2,  
Human Resources Division

Carol Patterson,  
Personnel Specialist 2,  
Human Resources Division

Alfonso Perez,  
Waste Enforcement Officer 1,  
Enforcement Division

Christopher Rose,  
Deputy Director-  
Administration,  
Director's Office

**Welcome the following members back to the DSWM:**

Gayle Love,  
Special Projects Adm. 2,  
Garbage and Trash  
Operations

**Finally, congratulations, best wishes and a heartfelt thank you for jobs well done to four DSWM employees who have recently retired:**

- Willie Pitts, Trash Crane Operator, Trash Division, 32 years
- Donald Godwin, Trash Crane Operator, Trash Division, 31 years
- Lance Royale, Buyer, Business Management and Public Affairs Division, 24 years
- Alvin Robinson, Landfill Superintendent, Landfills Division, 23 years

## DSWM'S HARD WORK is Recognized!

The DSWM received a letter from a customer that recognized the **EZ Go Waste Cart** as a great improvement to Miami-Dade County and DSWM employees. For a customer to take the time to express her appreciation for the service provided in her neighborhood proves that *Delivering Excellence Every Day* equals customer satisfaction.

*I have long felt that the men and women of SWM are truly the heroes of this County. No County employee works as hard in adverse conditions and in a potentially dangerous environment. Plus the collectors are great guys ... my neighborhood crew always waves at everyone they see and yell good morning as they travel down the road.*

*Today, for the first time I saw the automatic disposal system and I was amazed. It was quick, clean, safe and very cool. I am happy to see this great improvement as I think it will make a safer work environment for our collectors in terms of picking up heavy waste cans and bags and possibly being hurt.*

*Congratulations on this wonderful system and having such a dedicated workforce.*

*Jane*

# EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

## Employees Complete Trash Truck Driver 2 Training

Several DSWM employees are ready for new job opportunities within the Department after completing the DSWM's Trash Truck Driver 2 Training program.

Willie Davis, Jr., Daimion Delancy, Derrick Irby, Steve Jackson, IV, Allreatha Johnson, Calvin Jones and Desiderio Valdes recently completed the DSWM's four weeks of classroom learning at Miami Lakes Technical Educational Center and three weeks of on-the-job training. After graduating and passing a performance test, the employees were then eligible to apply for a promotion during the next promotional sign-up period.

If you are interested in participating in a Trash Truck Driver 2 Training program, you must meet the following requirements:

1. Have a CDL Class "B" or Class "A" license, permit or test history form.
2. Have continuous employment with permanent status and three years of acceptable on-the-job performance as a Waste Attendant 1, Waste Attendant 2, Waste Collector, Trash Truck Driver 1 or Waste Truck Driver.

If you meet the requirements, you can sign-up for the class, but you must wait for the



next sign-up period. If you have any questions or would like more information on the program, call Yolanda Minus at (305) 514-6702 or Omar de Armas at (305) 514-6697 in the Human Resources Division. To stay current on all driving promotions and training programs, call the Human Resources Hotline at (305) 514-6601.

## Leading the Charge to Excellence

Every successful sports team has that go-to-guy, the one that knows the team forwards and backwards and won't drop the ball if you put it in their hands. For the Chicago Bulls it was Michael Jordan, for the Miami Heat it's Dwayne Wade, and the DSWM Procurement Section has a go-to-girl, Ms. Ermine Brookes.

Because Brookes has surpassed the standards of a model employee and has done outstanding work inside and outside her Department, in 2006 she won the Miami-Dade

County Employee of the Year Honorable Mention award in the Jose Bacallao category.

Brookes has worked for the County 25 years, and at the DSWM she is often sought after when questions arise on procurement issues. Her knowledge of the procurement system goes hand-in-hand with her communication skills, courtesy, and general work ethic.

If the only thing known about Brookes was her commitment to her job she would still qualify for a recognition, but she also finds time to volunteer in the Guardian Ad Litem Program.

The program, which Brookes has been enrolled in since June 2005, allows her to be a voice in court for abused, abandoned or neglected children in Miami-Dade County. She is currently Guardian Ad Litem for four dependent children.

A shining example of *Delivering Excellence Every Day*, with Ermine Brookes we know the ball is in good hands.



**Delivering Excellence  
Every Day**



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